Bilateral Trade between India and Croatia

811. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Croatia have decided to further strengthen their bilateral trade and economic cooperation; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) The Indo-Croatian Joint Committee on Trade & Economic Cooperation has been established with a view to strengthen cooperation between the two countries. Four meetings of the Joint Committee has taken place since 1994. The last (4th) Session of the Committee was concluded in New Delhi on November 17, 1998 in which many areas of cooperation were discused like Tourism, Telecommunication, Automobile Sector, Enginnering, Electronic and Software, Chemicals Petro-Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals, ship-building, Agriculture.

(ii) Both the countries have extended 'Most Favoured Nation' Treatment to each other in respect of import and export licences, customs duties and all other charges and taxes as applicable.

(iii) The business communities of both the countries are being encouraged to improve direct business level contacts through trade fairs and exhibitions, exchange of delegation and to promote joint ventures and other forms of economic cooperation.

Export and Import Policy Regarding Agricultural Proudcts

812. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the policy regarding export and import of agricultural produce;

(b) the quantum and value of imports and exports of agricultural produce; and

(c) the efforts being made to make exports of agricultural produce more possible?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The policy of the Government to permit exports of agricultural products and farm goods is governed principally by the concerns of India's food security, maximising farm Incomes and earning foreign exchange. Review of export performance of agricultural products is an on-going process and accordingly policy interventions are made, as and when considered necessary with a view to making agricultural exports increasingly viable. The import policy of the Government is primarily based on augmentation of domestic supplies to meet the local requirements and providing inputs at reasonable price to the processors/manufacturers of food items. The details of the Export import Policy of agricultural items is available in ITC (HS) Classification of Exports and import items published by Ministry of Commerce, copies of which are supplied to Parliament Library.

(b) During the year 1997-98 the Export-Import figures of agricultural products are EXPROTS: RS. 17125.95 CRORES

IMPORTS: RS. 6379.01 CRORES
[Source: DGCI&S, Calcutta]

(c) Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken to enhance exports of agricultural products and farm goods include.

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical knowhow of farmers through dermonstrations, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables, improving productivity and training of farmers.